In this guide, I'm going to show you how to make your own music with the instruments from LSD: Dream Emulator. Included is a legend to where specific instruments are located in the SoundFonts. Some basic knowledge on how to use a DAW is assumed.

What is a SoundFont?

To start, it might help to understand more precisely what a SoundFont is. In the early days of video games when disk space was a scarce resource, consoles would read a sort of 'sheet music' provided by the game to play the intended music and sound effects. These instructions are a lot more space-efficient than an audio file, like the songs on your computer or phone.

What's interesting is that these instructions can be interpreted in different ways. Are those notes being played on the world's daintiest triangle, or a full orchestra ensemble? It's up to the developers' choice of virtual instruments.

In this day and age, unofficial third parties can take a look inside games for these proprietary virtual instruments and convert them to a more widely-used standard: the SoundFont. You can combine these SoundFonts with MIDI files, even those of your own creation, and play anything with the instruments of those video games!

The LSD SoundFont

The SoundFont files for LSD: Dream Emulator have been graciously provided by Twitter user @saturnultra. I have no clue about his specific process for extracting them, but it probably involved fiddling around with a string of outdated and hard-to-find programs. Thanks again!

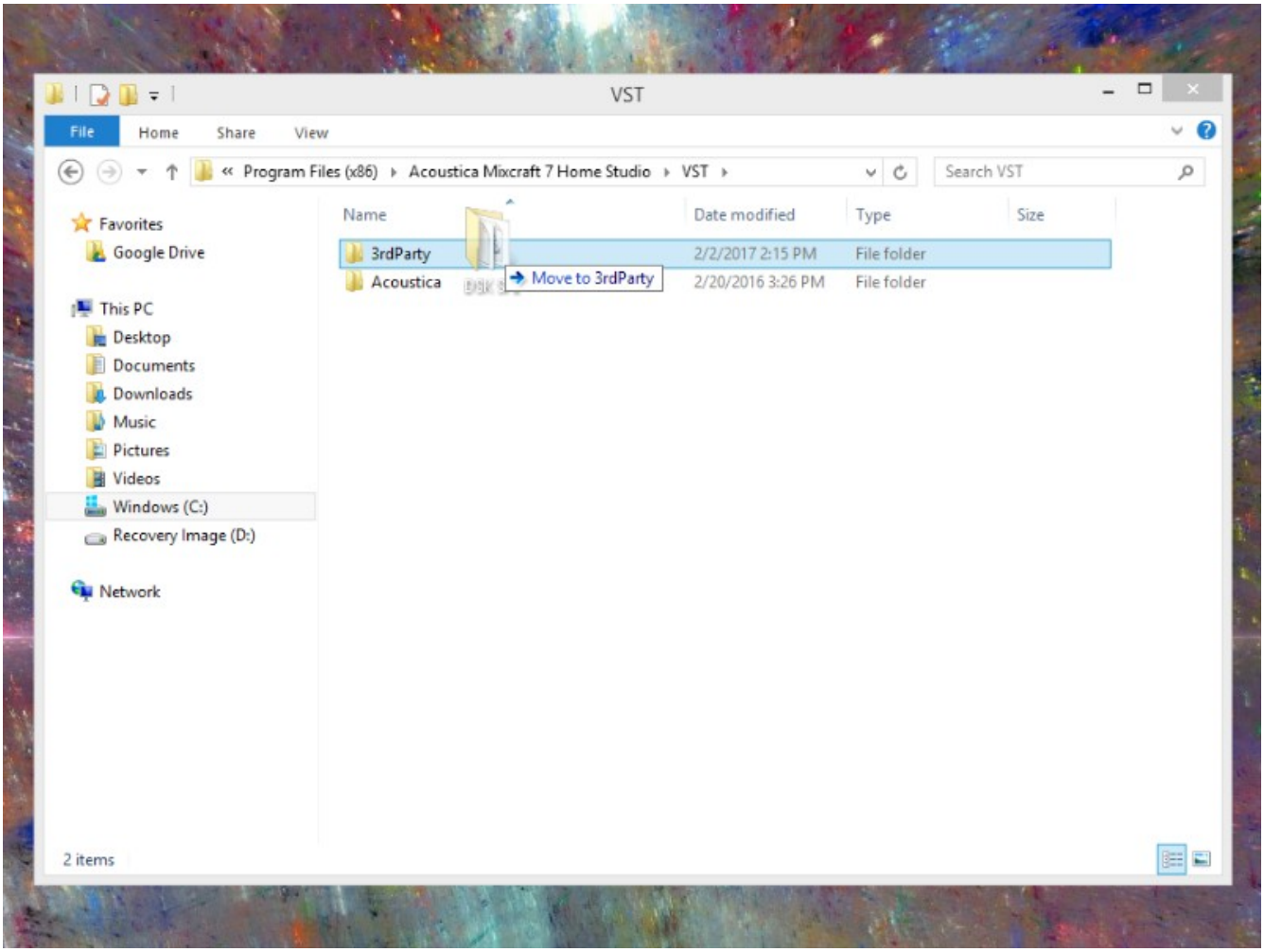
The files are included in the same directory as this guide, and are labeled: AMBIENT, CARTOON, ELECTRO, ETHNOVA, HUMAN, LOVELY, and STANDERD. At the start of each day in LSD: Dream Emulator, one of these files is selected to play all of the sheet music encountered. You'll definitely start to recognize which is which.

If you found this guide somewhere by itself, everything can be downloaded from this shared Google Drive folder.

Setting Up

To be able to use these SoundFonts, we're going to need to download a VST plugin. I'm using DSK SF2, but only because it's the first working, free option that I found. It's entirely possible there are better alternatives out there.

In your DAW's directory, there's usually a folder labeled 'Plugins' or 'VST' where you can put the unzipped download.



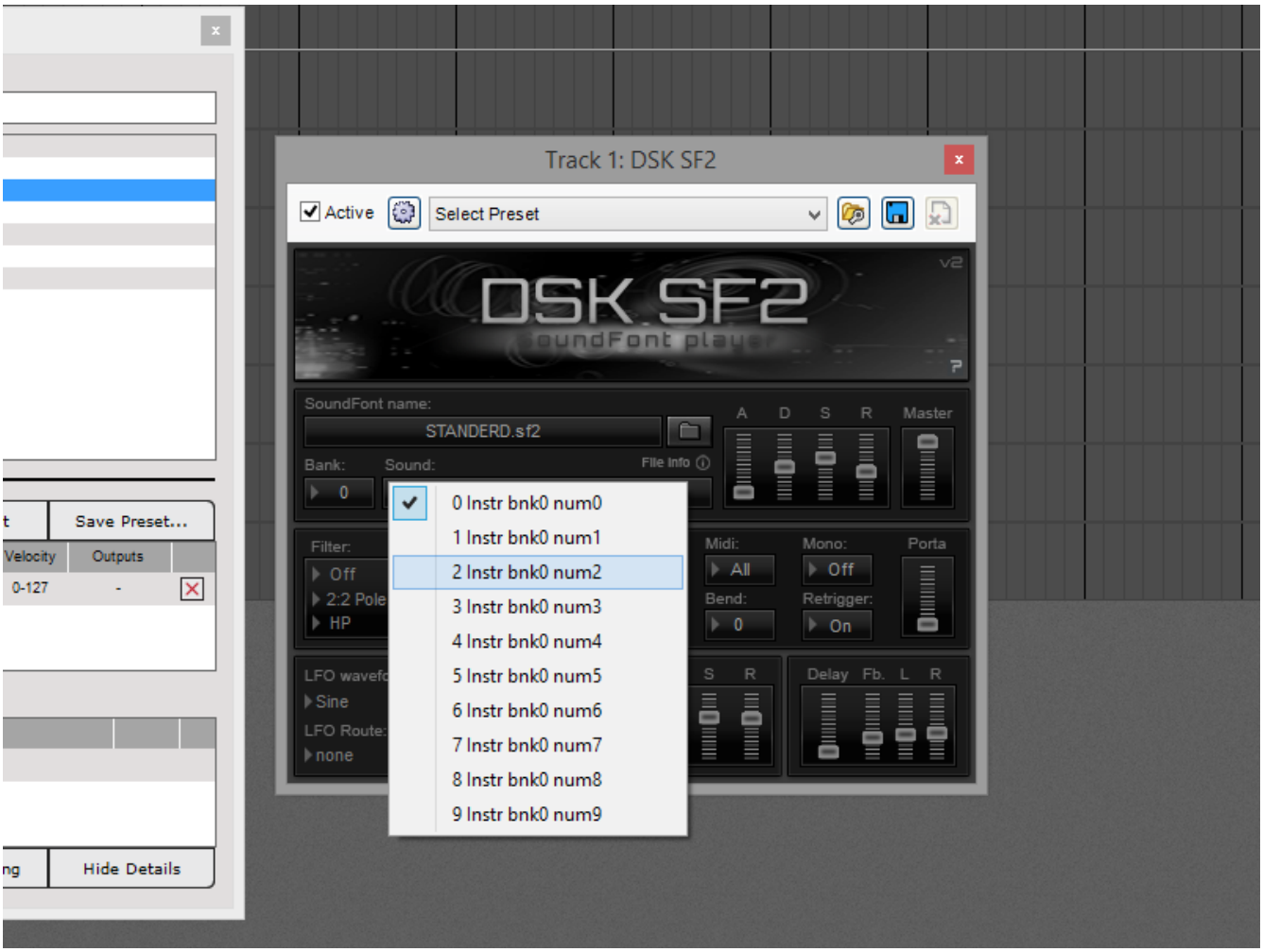
Moving the download to my program's VST folder

Now we have to attach the plugin to a MIDI track. The exact steps will vary from program to program, but it should be similar to selecting any old virtual instrument for the track. Check to see if there's a category dedicated to third party VST's.

Once the plugin is set up, you can point it to a SoundFont (.sf2) file and select one of its ten instruments. Lots of these function like a regular tonal instrument in the DAW, but there are also some drums and sound effects.

If I wanted to select the 'Classic bass' instrument from this excerpt of the legend...

	STANDERD
0	Drums
1	Alt drums
2	Classic bass
3	Low droning guitar / drum



It would look like this in DSK SF2.

There's just one last thing you should know before getting started!

Have you ever seen a piano that's been set to 'split', where the scale of notes starts over halfway down? That's more or less what's happening in all the legend entries marked with a slash. They decided to cram two instruments into the allotted range, each with half the space, rather than fill it all up with one instrument.

Happy creating!

Legend

	CARTOON:	ELECTRO:
0	Drums	Drums
1	Sfx / "bom" voice	Alt drums
2	Classic bass	Electro bass
3	Gargle	Vocoder bass
4	Telephone ring	Sine here, please
5	Trumpet	Harsh synth
6	Zoom / horn	Harmony, bad / buzzy noise
7	Hit / crunchy synth	Alarm synth / moist
8	Fart / flute	Laser blast / underwater
9	Metal drum	Synth bass

	ETHNOVA:	HUMAN:
0	Drums	Human drums
1	Alt drums (tabla)	Human drums from hell / "oh" voice
2	Didgeridoo	Wet noise
3	Ethnic drums	Another distinct voice instrument ("ah")
4	Shakuhachi	Yodeling voice
5	Horrible harmony	Unpleasant voice harmony
6	Ethnic drums 2 / stringed instrument	Strained yell / buzzy "boing" voice
7	Bell / swish	Oh / peep
8	Wavering voice / sitar	"Ma'am" / "desu no wa"
9	Sitar	Various "la's"

	LOVELY:	STANDERD:
0	Drums	Drums
1	Sfx / synth	Alt drums
2	Classic bass	Classic bass
3	Vocoder synth	Low droning guitar / drum
4	Unnerving voice	Voice
5	Wavery 8-bit tone	Strings
6	Strained synth / bell tone	Synth
7	Jangly keys synth / blip synth	Soft Synth
8	Layered synth / squirrel laugh	Guitar chord / weird fret noise
9	Pitched drum	Simple piano

	AMBIENT:
0	Ambient wash
1	Underwater noises (only in low range)
2	Siren (only on f's)
3	Vintage noise (g2 and e3)
4	Humming
5	Choir
6	"Oh yeah" (d4 and eb5)
7	(left blank)
8	Jingling / dropping coin
9	Humming wind

If you make anything with these SoundFonts, I encourage you to share it with other fans! :)
- badcafe

Fuck Yeah LSD: Dream Emulator

/r/osamusato